

Comments from the May 17 Lawyers Road Park Public Information Meeting

It was interesting to see your Needs Assessment and you cited a lot of park needs for this two-mile radius (from the park). I didn't see a need for undeveloped open space listed. We don't have enough undeveloped land and it is disappearing rapidly.

For the Windover, Carriage Hill, and Galloway communities to access the site on foot would mean a hazardous crossing of Lawyer's Road.

I personally am more comfortable having you develop a park than having someone build 26 houses.

I just want to say I'm very appreciative of the open environment at this meeting. I have small children and I represent parents with small children in the area who probably can't be here tonight (because of their children). We have a need for a playground, tennis courts, and ball fields. Especially with a 50-foot buffer between park uses and nearby homes, it would make those homes very desirable and valuable.

Carriage Hills is on well and septic. Care must be taken to protect these systems.

The entrance and egress to the park must be planned with safety in mind.

Adequate parking is essential. People cannot park in Carriage Hill and safely cross Lawyers Road.

Traffic control needs to be planned because the sight lines are limited. People in Carriage Hill, Wendover, Bridle Ridge must be able to safely leave their community especially if they wish to go east towards Vienna.

Consider including a play space for little children, i.e. preschool/early elementary. Currently the nearest such space is off Jermantown Road.

Leave the park as is.

Please consider therapeutic riding and the County's at Risk Riding Program.

To make it easier to walk to the park we need an overpass (walking bridge) along with sidewalk on the other side of Lawyers Road(north).

Please build a soccer/baseball field.

Regarding access from Lawyers Road:

- Instead of a four way stop; consider widening Lawyers Road there and using turn lanes.
 - For access from the Carrhill, Wendover, etc. neighborhoods consider a walking bridge over lawyers Road for safety concerns.
 - This is a young growing community with tons of kids.
 - Would love to see fields and a playground for kids – noticed that the demographics of the group was about 50+. We need playgrounds and fields since many of the neighboring areas are loaded with children.
 - For neighbors/residents, etc. who are interested in natural walks – preserved space etc...don't forget to point out that on Garrett there is a walking path/walkway that is very nice that takes you through all the way to Riviera Road – another example of preserved park land right in the Glen Cannon neighborhood.
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We are the first houses in Carriage Hill on Carrhill Road. We have three children, our youngest being 18 months old – so maybe he'll be the only child in our family to ever use the park if and when it gets developed. A playground and skateboard park would be a wonderful addition to the land across from our neighborhood. My kids and friends love it.

Please put the aerial photo on the website and links or information on groundwater recharge mentioned at meeting.

Nature or hiking trails, nothing else.

Lawyers Road should be improved before a park's in place similar to Hunter Mill Road.

We would prefer there be no access (no pedestrian access) via McChesney or McDuff (Glen Cannon). We have no doubt people from neighboring areas would park on our side streets to avoid Lawyers Road and walk into the park. We would have legal recourse. It would ruin the ambience of our development.

Please hold two summer meetings because many people will be out of town and miss the July meeting.

We would prefer no link to the WO&D trail. We feel this would open a “community park” to many bikers who live nowhere near what is supposed to be a local community park.

Consider providing a park that is tied to the bike trail. A curb cut at Lawyers Road opposite Carriage Hill entrance would not be safe without a light or stop sign. Site lines are very difficult.

The problem with this site is that the only possible entrance is hazardous.

If the biggest unmet need in this area is soccer fields, this was a poor choice as the entrance and exit is dangerous.

The need for parking and level fields means major landscaping change – drainage help.

If next need is trails – access to WO&D means a bridge - another traffic hazard.

Very nice job in presenting the information. We are very much in favor of a park similar to Wolf Trails, perhaps. Lawyers Road would need a four way stop sign.

Would love to see multi-use park with playgrounds, picnic areas, and multi-use courts.

We need a small community recreation area, a playground and maybe one rectangular field. The topography doesn't lend itself to more fields. Meadow Lane Park appears to not have been updated since the 70's. Glyndon Park the same.

Peterson Lane Park appears newer but small and not easily accessed (certainly not on foot) by residents on the other side of Lawyers Road. The fact that if the site has low habitat value makes it even more appropriate to have a park there. Put “no parking” signs in Carrhill and speed bumps on Lawyers and a small amount of parking at the access site to encourage a “walk to” park only. Arlington County – a much more urban locale has far more, better, more easily accessed, than the Vienna area of Fairfax County.

We live at 10091 Lawyers Road. We are very concerned about safety. Cars go very quickly down a hill to the left of our home and if there is traffic there, I expect accidents. Access needs to be carefully planned.

Recommend that you balance the overall county needs (recreation fields) with neighborhood needs. Personally would like good running paths utilizing the hills and lighted tennis courts, possible also a garden area.

We do not want lights for night games.

It's important to be an active participant in the Park Planning Process.

Lawyer's Road School Site Park
May 17, 2005 Public Information Meeting
Citizen Questions

1. I thought that if the School Board decided not to develop the site it would revert back to the Glen Cannon Community Association ownership. Is this true?

No, there is not a revision-clause in the deeds for this property.

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2. Will you post tonight's slide presentation on the County's Web Site? I would like to look at it more closely.

The presentation is available on the Park Authority website:

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/gmp/lawyersrdpres.htm>

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3. Are there any other rights-of-way that could be developed to access the property other than from Lawyer's Road?

No, the site has no other road frontage (besides two pedestrian-width extensions to McDuff and McChesney Courts) or access easement rights.

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4. Is there a water management study being done for the site?

No, but the park master plan will provide guidance for protecting water quality and controlling storm water runoff.

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5. Is there a floodplain on the property?

No. The County's Floodplain Ordinance is for streams that drain an area of seventy acres or more. No streams are located on the property although there are some drainage swales.

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6. If you do access the site from Lawyer's Road, would the access be directly across from Carriage Hill Road?

The access location is going to be determined based on safety issues (including site-distance) in conjunction with Fairfax County Department of Transportation and Virginia Department of Transportation. At this time, it is anticipated that the

transportation agencies will request the entry be located directly across from Carrhill Road.

7. Are you going to be hiring outside design consultants to plan this park, or will the Park Authority be doing it in-house?

The Park Authority is developing this plan in-house and has an experienced, professional staff team that includes certified planners, landscape architects, naturalists, recreation specialists, and archaeologists.

8. By the time of the workshop in July, will you already have developed a few design concepts that you will present to us?

Yes, the Park Authority will provide several options for discussing at the July workshop.

9. This seems to be a difficult site to develop for a number of reasons (vehicular access, a hill in the middle, water runoff). Why not leave it undeveloped?

There is a significant deficit of park and recreation opportunities in the County. This site is no more difficult to develop than the surrounding residential subdivisions and there are no unique natural or cultural resources on the site.

10. It seemed that you were really stressing the need for recreational fields.

There is a significant deficit of many types of park and recreational facilities in the County including trails, picnic facilities, rectangular fields, and skate parks. If you review the presentation from May 17 (see website link) you will see that there were a variety of needs identified not just recreational fields.

11. What consideration is given to the existing deer on the site and which office is responsible for it?

The Park Authority's Resource Management Division regularly deals with management of the deer population on Park sites.

12. Will there be adequate parking on site to prevent people from parking on the street (Lawyer's Road, Carriage Hill Road)?

Yes. The Park Master Plan will identify the necessary parking for the proposed facilities once it is determined what the appropriate facilities are.

13. This place has remained dormant for 17 years. How did this process start? Did the community come to you or did the Park Authority initiate the process?

The Park Authority Board initiated the process in response to the significant deficit of park and recreation opportunities in the County (see the County's Parks and Recreational Needs Assessment).

14. It seems you have determined a need for ball fields. Did you canvass the people who live within a two-mile radius to make this determination? It seems like ball fields (to serve people outside the two-mile radius) are being thrust upon us.

No decisions have yet been made regarding what facilities will be located at the Lawyers Road Park. There should be consideration of a rectangular field and/or youth diamond based on the demonstrated need within the two-mile radius of the site. There is a known deficit of four rectangular fields and two youth baseball fields within the two mile service radius of this site.

15. Are you going to develop an idea for the park and say this is our starting point and then ask us what we want?

One of the primary purposes of the May 17 public meeting was to find out what the meeting participants want at the park site. The Park Authority will use the information gathered at the May 17 meeting combined with other comments received and known park and recreational needs to develop several alternative park site development scenarios to discuss with the community at the July 12 meeting.

16. You mentioned a 50-foot buffer between ball fields and neighboring houses. Is that simply leaving the land undisturbed, or does it include building a fence?

The Park Master Plan that is being developed will provide guidance for the issue of the buffer. Typically, the Park Authority will use supplemental plantings within the

buffer to increase its effectiveness as a visual screen if needed. Fences have also been used in some circumstances.

17. Do you have any information about the impact on property values of homes near a new park?

Realty studies have consistently shown that properties adjacent to parkland have higher value.

18. Can we make this more of a walk-to park, rather than a drive-to park?

A Community Park provides park and recreational opportunities for a wide variety of activities for citizens from several miles around. There should be opportunities for access to the park from many types of transportation including on-foot and by vehicle.

19. Where does the user fee go?

The County charges a small user fee for organized sports teams to register for leagues. The user fee offsets the cost of registering and scheduling teams.

20. Is there a Fairfax County Park that has been developed in the last twenty years in a similar setting that is used for passive uses only?

Not really. Woodglen Lake is a passive use park of similar size but not of similar setting as it is primarily water. The Park Authority has preserved thousands of acres for passive use parks. The majority of passive use parks are located adjacent to stream valleys.

21. It appears that you will probably jam a field in there no matter what this group wants. What are you going to do about lights and parking? I don't want you to build 50 parking spaces. How do we convince you to limit the use of lights and not have night games that go until 11 p.m.?

No decisions have yet been made regarding what facilities will be located at the Lawyers Road Park. One of the primary purposes of the May 17 public meeting was

to find out what the meeting participants want at the park site. If an athletic facility is planned, it will be necessary to provide sufficient parking so that park users will not be forced to park on neighborhood roads. The parking standard for athletic fields is fifty parking spaces per field. Our non-lit park sites are open dawn to dusk. It is likely that this site would fall into that category. If a lit field were proposed, lighting is shut off by 11:00 p.m. pursuant to park policy.

22. How many homes are in the two mile radius circle around the park?

The service area population is roughly 28,000. At an average household density of 2.75, that equates to approximately 10,000 homes.

23. Since you are planning a county park on Lawyers Road, why doesn't the Park Authority maintain the bike path along Lawyers Road? The condition is dismal. The park is overgrown, the asphalt has caved in at areas (dangerous) and this is not encouraging when I think about a new park that will be developed.

The trail is located with VDOT right-of-way and is their responsibility to maintain. We have notified VDOT of the problem.

24. Can the hours that the park is open be restricted to lessen night noise and traffic?

Our non-lit park sites are open dawn to dusk. If a lit field were proposed, park hours would be dawn to 11:00 p.m.

25. A park in this site is out of balance with the surroundings. Why not fix up existing parks?

Most communities consider a park as an asset as opposed to something that is "out-of-balance." The Park Authority's Park Operations Divisions maintains all of our park sites.

26. How will increased traffic flow be managed?

The park will contribute less traffic to the local road network than an alternative use on the site (such as a school or new residential development). One of the purposes of the park master plan will be to address how to manage traffic generated by the park.

27. Will there be only one meeting—the workshop—for collective input?

The Park Authority's public process allows for input at any time through mail or e-mail. There are three public meetings scheduled (a public information meeting was held on May 17, a public planning workshop will be held on July 12, and the third, a public hearing, will be scheduled in the late fall).

28. Is there another, similar park in the County in the same situation (that is, of there being houses all around the site)?

Fairfax County is a community of nearly one million people. Nearly all of the County's park sites are surrounded by housing. Wolf Trails is an example of a nearby Community Park that might be similar.

29. What are the passive use options?

Trails, nature centers, and undisturbed open space are generally considered passive uses. The Park Authority typically includes a mix of passive and active uses at the County's park sites.

30. How will the noise of an active recreational park (e.g., sports) be managed?

The Park Authority rarely receives complaints about noise levels at our Community Parks. There are several reasons for this including the fact that the fields are allocated toward the interior of the park site and that large crowds do not attend local games.

31. Carriage Hill entrance:

Will sightlines be considered?

Absolutely. Safety will be the key consideration for any vehicular entrance to the park.

Could curb cuts be there?

Curb cuts are needed where there is a curb and gutter road section. Currently, the section of Lawyers Road in front of the site is a rural section (aggregate shoulder sloping off to an unpaved ditch). Fairfax County and Virginia Departments of Transportation will determine whether this portion of Lawyers Road needs to be converted to a curb and gutter section.

Has there been any discussion with VDOT?

The Park Authority is in the initial stages of park master planning and has had no conversations with VDOT at this point. The Park Authority will be discussing all of the pertinent transportation planning issues with Fairfax County and Virginia Departments of Transportation as part of the park master planning process.

32. Given that it is dangerous to cross Lawyers Road, will there be adequate parking on site?

Yes. Adequate Parking will be provided onsite.

33. The homes at Carriage Hill have septic and well water, and these things are affected whenever there is construction nearby; how will this be addressed for this project?

The park master plan will provide guidance for protecting water quality and controlling storm water runoff including Low Impact Design measures to recharge groundwater.

34. Is leaving the site dormant, that is, “as is,” an option?

Leaving the site “as is” is not a practical option considering the large unmet needs of Fairfax County citizens for park and recreational opportunities.

35. How are options for the park developed?

The project staff team will develop several alternative options to discuss with the public at the upcoming July 12 public planning workshop meeting. Those options will be based on public input from the May 17 meeting, known park and recreational needs as identified in the Parks and Recreational Needs Assessment, and taking into account the assets and liabilities of the site.

36. Will Lawyers Road be improved?

The Park Authority will be discussing all of the pertinent transportation planning issues with Fairfax County and Virginia Departments of Transportation as part of the park master planning process. The Park Authority will comply with their recommendations. Based on experience with our other park sites, it is possible that one recommendation would be to provide turn lanes.

37. Are the [existing] [foot] paths into the park owned by the community?

It is unclear what footpaths are being referenced. The School Board owns (and the Park Authority controls under a long term lease) the site which includes two narrow strips of land (one to McDuff Court and the other to McChesney Court) that are used for pedestrian access to the site.

38. Would these pedestrian paths remain?

Yes. Otherwise the Glencannon community would have to go out to Lawyers Road to access the site.

39. Given the worries about topography, sightlines and safety, can or will a large portion of the site be preserved as nice, undisturbed, upland forest?

This site is no more difficult to develop than surrounding sites where residential subdivisions were developed. There are no unique natural or cultural resources on the site. One of the purposes of the master plan is to identify strategies to address issues related to topography, sightlines, and safety.

40. Are there any partnerships, e.g., with Vienna Youth Soccer, that are driving choices for the park?

No. Alternative scenarios for park development will be based on public input from the May 17 meeting, known park and recreational needs as identified in the Parks and Recreational Needs Assessment, and taking into account the assets and liabilities of the site.

41. Will the proposed plan be seen [made available for review] before the public hearing?

Yes. The plan will be available online and in paper copy for a period of thirty days prior to the public hearing. (The public hearing is anticipated in late fall 2005).

42. Question posed to those present: Would you like to see an active athletic component?

(Approximately one-quarter to one-third of meeting attendees raised their hands.)

(end of questions)